

Message Text

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 05073 061442Z

ACTION EB-08

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6328

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 5073

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, ELAB, JO

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON LABOR STANDARDS

REF: STATE 136706

1. JORDAN'S LABOR LAW (NO. 21 OF 1960) AS AMENDED (BY LAWS NO. 2 OF 1965, NO. 25 OF 1972, NO. 48 OF 1975 AND NO. 7 OF 1976) APPLIES TO JORDAN'S ENTIRE ECONOMY RATHER THAN JUST EXPORT AND IMPORT SUBSTITUTING SECTORS; IT DOES NOT CONTAIN PROVISIONS WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS BEING AIMED AT TRADE DISTORTION. THE ONLY WORKERS AND EMPLOYEES NOT RPT NOT SUBJECT TO PROVISIONS OF LABOR LAW ARE PRECISELY THOSE EXCLUDED FROM STUDY AS CITED PARA. 5 REFTEL.

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION REQUESTED PAGH. 3 REFTEL AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE LABOR LAW DOES NOT ADDRESS SLAVE, INDENTURED OR OTHER FORCED LABOR IN ANY SECTOR OF ECONOMY. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, THERE ARE NO SUCH LABOR PRACTICES IN JORDAN.

B. CHILD LABOR COVERED UNDER SECTIONS 46-49 OF LABOR LAW. NO CHILD UNDER 13 YEARS OF AGE MAY WORK AND NO CHILD (DEFINED AS ANYONE UNDER 16) OVER 13 MAY WORK WITHOUT A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE STATING THAT HE OR SHE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 05073 061442Z

IS PHYSICALLY ABLE TO WORK. CHILDREN MAY NOT WORK MORE THAN SIX HOURS PER DAY AND NEVER BETWEEN 7 PM AND 6 AM. COMMENT:ALTHOUGH PROVISION EXISTS FOR PUNISHING EMPLOYERS VIOLATING THESE AND OTHER LABOR REGULATIONS, INSPECTION MACHINERY IS INADEQUATE AND VIOLATORS, THOUGH OFTEN WARNED, ARE RARELY FINED AND ALMOST NEVER PROSECUTED.

C. SAFETY AT WORK PLACE REGULATED UNDER SECTIONS 29-36 OF LABOR LAW. ALTHOUGH LABOR LAW MAKES ONLY PASSING REFERENCE TO ENSURING AGAINST WORKER EXPOSURE TO "POISONING", MINLABOR ACTIVELY PURSUING OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE TO UPDATE LOCAL INFORMATION ON EFFECTS OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES ON WORKERS' HEALTH AND TO DEVELOP NEW WORK PLACE PRACTICES IN FIELD OF WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY. AFL-CIO'S ASIAN AMERICAN FREE LABOR INSTITUTE (AAFLI) HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA BUT HAS NOT DONE SO SO FAR.

D. THERE ARE NO DIFFERENTIAL LABOR PRACTICES OR REGULATIONS IN JORDAN. IN GENERAL, GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES ESTABLISHMENT OF LABOR UNIONS, BUT IS INTERESTED IN THEIR BECOMING ACTIVE ONLY IN SOCIAL WELFARE PROJECTS AND NOT IN POLITICS. WHILE STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS ARE NOT EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW, LABOR DISPUTES ARE USUALLY SETTLED WITHIN THE REQUIRED FOURTEEN DAY NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO STRIKE PERIOD, WITH HEAVY MEDIATION PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS BY MINLABOR OFFICIALS. WAGE LEVELS ARE NOT CONTROLLED OR ARTIFICALLY DEPRESSED BY GOVERNMENT.
SUDDARTH

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